NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

TREE/SHRUB PRUNING

(Ac.)

CODE 660

DEFINITION

Removing all or parts of selected branches or leaders from trees and shrubs.

PURPOSE

- Improve the appearance of trees or shrubs, e.g., ornamental plants and Christmas trees.
- Improve the quality of wood products.
- Improve the production of plant products, e.g., nuts, fruits, boughs and tips.
- Reduce fire and/or safety hazards.
- Improve the growth and vigor of understory plants.
- Adjust the foliage and branching density for other specific intents, such as wind and snow control, noise abatement, access control, and visual screens.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

On any area with trees or shrubs.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

The pruning and shearing method and timing will match the limitations of the site and soils, achieve purposes for the specific tree or shrub species, and be conducted in a safe and efficient manner.

Pruning or shearing will not adversely reduce the growth and vigor of the tree or shrub for the intended purpose.

Debris and vegetative material left on the site after treatment will not present an unacceptable fire or pest hazard or interfere with the intended purpose and other management activities.

Comply with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations during the installation, operation and maintenance of this practice.

Burning of removed vegetation shall follow the criteria and considerations listed in the Prescribed Burning (338).

CONSIDERATIONS

Pruning and shearing should be timed to minimize disturbance to seasonal wildlife activities.

Pruning and shearing tools should be disinfected to prevent the spread of pathogens.

Review the estimated cost and projected economic benefits of the project before starting a pruning or shearing project.

To maintain plant growth and sustain vigor, pruning and shearing may be done in two or more timed intervals.

Time pruning and shearing to minimize potential damage to the tree bole and stems.

Debris and other vegetation (biomass) removed may be used to produce energy. Management alternatives should consider the amount of energy required to produce and convert the biomass into energy with the amount produced by the biomass.

Sufficient herbaceous vegetation must be left in the stand following pruning to prevent wind erosion and other natural resource concerns.

NRCS, ALASKA

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PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications for applying this practice shall be prepared for each site and recorded using approved specification sheets, job sheets, technical notes and narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Periodically inspect plant condition and take additional actions as necessary, e.g., additional pruning, pest management, nutrient management and forest stand improvement.